

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05

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R 080846Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO COMIDEASTFOR

INFO CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

CNO WASHDC

SECSTATE WASHDC 1822

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 3132

E.O. 11651, GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CE

SUBJ: U.S. VISITS TO SRI LANKA: TEHRAN JOURNAL ARTICLE

REF: COMIDEASTFOR MESSAGE DTG 211737Z OCT. 74 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM, WITHOUT AROUSING UNDESIRABLE INTEREST, WHETHER STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO SRI LANKA'S DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN "TEHRAN JOURNAL" WAS IN FACT MADE BY HIM. WE BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT DEPUTY MINISTER MAY HAVE MADE SUCH STATEMENT AT MOST RECENT MONTHLY PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 18. QUESTION MIGHT HAVE BEEN RAISED IN CONTEXT OF PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO IRAN, OCTOBER 27 - 30, AND PROMINENCE GIVEN TO INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE PROPOSAL AS PROSPECTIVE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN PM AND IRANIANS. STATEMENT HAS NOT BEEN CARRIED IN LOCAL PRESS, ALTHOUGH OTHER PORTIONS PRESS CONFERENCE HAVE BEEN; WE BELIEVE GSL WOULD TRY TO PREVENT ANY LOCAL PRESS PLAY UNLESS IT HAD DECIDED TO ENFORCE NON-NUCLEAR DECLARATION POLICY FOR VISITING NAVAL VESSELS.

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2. QUOTATION, ASSUMING ITS ACCURACY, REPRESENTS

REITERATION OF PUBLICLY STATED GSL POLICY REQUIRING NON-NUCLEAR DECLARATION BY VISITING VESSELS THAT HAS BEEN ON BOOKS SINCE 1964 BUT NOT ENFORCED IN PAST THREE YEARS. WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT GSLNOW INTENDS REVIVE REQUIREMENTS AND WE CAN ONLY EXPLAIN DEPUTY MINISTER'S PRESUMED STATEMENT AS PRODUCT HIS AT TIMES INEPT AND UNBRIEFED HANDLING OF PRESS CONFERENCES. WE HOPE STATEMENT WILL REMAIN BURIED IN TEHRAN.
VAN HOLLEN

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